

Committee: Stansted Airport Advisory Panel
Title: Response to Stansted Airport’s Noise Action Plan (NAP) 2024-2028.
Report Author: Dean Hermitage – Director of Planning

Date: 17 August 2023

Summary

1. Manchester Airports Group (MAG) / Stansted Airport is seeking views on its draft Noise Action Plan (NAP). The consultation runs until 28 August 2023.
2. The airport is required to produce a NAP every five years to assess, consider and manage aircraft noise at the airport, and to seek to reduce impacts on communities living around the Airport. It is a legal requirement under the Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended).
3. STAAP is to receive a presentation on the NAP, consider its position on the consultation and make recommendations as to the content of the council’s response to the consultation.

Recommendations

4. That the panel supports the recommendations contained within this report.

Financial Implications

5. None.

Background Papers

6. Open consultation - [Draft Noise Action Plan 2024-2028 \(maginfrastructure.com\)](https://maginfrastructure.com)

Impact

7. As per table:

Communication/Consultation	n/a
Community Safety	n/a
Equalities	n/a
Health and Safety	n/a
Human Rights/Legal Implications	n/a

Sustainability	n/a
Ward-specific impacts	n/a
Workforce/Workplace	n/a

Situation

Background

8. The airport operates 24 hours a day, facilitating passenger, freight and general air traffic movements (ATMs). The Airport has a Consultative Committee (STACC) made up of elected Members from surrounding local authorities, community groups and user groups. The Committee has three sub-groups, including the Environmental Issues Group (EIG) which considers noise performance and proposed noise strategy and feed into the NAP.
9. In 2021 planning permission was granted to Stansted Airport to serve up to 43 million passengers per year within the existing annual aircraft movement limit of 274,000 (inc. up to 16,000 cargo ATMs). The planning permission includes a number of conditions which seek to control noise, notably an increased restriction on noise contours when operations reach +35mppa.
10. Noise at airports is assessed using noise data displayed as noise contours. Evidence produced by MAG shows improved noise contours since 2006, however it is acknowledged that the latest, 2021 noise contours maps will show an artificially low level of noise resulting from the impact of covid on aviation at that time.

The NAP

11. The Noise Action Plan is the Airport's strategy for managing aircraft noise in order to reduce impacts on residents living around the Airport. The plan includes specific measures or actions which the Airport is consulting on. A summary of the NAP actions 1 to 53 is included at **Appendix 1** (the full consultation document can be accessed via the link above).
12. Specific actions of note are discussed below.
13. NAP1 and NAP2 – Noise controls: the Airport states it will ensure that the area impacted by noise from aircraft operations remains within the noise contour areas detailed in its planning permission. Performance against these limits will be monitored annually.
14. This aligns with the Airport's planning requirements and should thus be supported.

15. The Airport states it will review operating fees and charges to incentivise the quietest possible fleet. The Airport will consider moving to an airline charging system to incentivise quieter aircraft and bring in a penalty scheme for unscheduled night flights. This is supported.
16. NAP13 and 14 – Departing aircraft: The airport states it will maintain a target that 99% of departing aircraft will remain within existing noise preferential routes, monitor off-track departures, and raise off-track departure fines to penalise airlines which are not working to improve their track-keeping.
17. The above is supported by officers and fines should be collected and distributed for community improvements and considered by the STACC. Details of the penalties, collection and distribution of monies should be available to members of the public.
18. NAP21 – 27 Night Noise: the Airport has committed not to permit any scheduled operations during the night period (23:00 to 07:00) using QC2¹-rated aircraft that do not hold historic rights to the slot, and will introduce a quota count limit on noise generated by aircraft operating during the summer scheduling season. This will likely ensure compliance with the 2021 planning permission controls and see that night noise does not increase as the airport grows. It will not necessarily reduce night noise going forward.
19. Members may wish to consider that the airport should go further and actively, and voluntarily, reduce night noise by reviewing historic agreements which may permit noisier aircraft to fly at night, and review dispensations (see para.20 below). Additional measures would have to be volunteered by the Airport and cannot be affected by the council under its statutory or town planning powers.
20. The Airport states (NAP23) that it will publish information about flights that have dispensation from night-flight restrictions. In 2022 the Airport noted over 1,000 dispensations; flights arriving at night as a result of delay and disruption. Members may wish to consider seeking further information on these flights, the reasons for them and whether the airlines in question attract any penalty as a result.
21. NAP30 – Mitigation Schemes: the Airport will continue to provide financial assistance for insulation to those most impacted by aircraft noise. The Sound Insulation Grants Scheme (SIGS) will be consistent with previously agreed obligations.
22. SIGS funding is provided for noise insulation measures such as double glazing, mechanical ventilation, and loft insulation. Not all houses are suitable though i.e. certain listed buildings. Funding does not cover listed

▪ ¹ Quota count – each aircraft type is classified and awarded a QC value depending on the noise it generates; the quieter the aircraft, the smaller the QC value – Airbus A319 = QC0.25; Boeing 777 = QC2.

building application costs. The scheme was recently improved with grants from £5,000 to £10,000 depending upon the zone within which a property is located.

23. Members may consider requesting the scheme is extended to include feasibility studies and other costs when it applies to a listed or conservation area property.

24. Members are invited to make any further comments on the actions.

Risk Analysis

25. None identified.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
1	1	1	1

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.